

NEW MEXICO STATE POLICE DEPARTMENT

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

SUBJECT SUSPENSION

DATE JULY 19, 1985

FROM CHIEF MAURICE L. CORDOVA 

TO OFFICER THOMAS R. RODELLA
New Mexico State Police
P. O. Box 1628
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-1628

ATTENTION OF
Sergeant Esteban Herrera
Sergeant James Jennings

The purpose of this correspondence is to provide written notice to you of your suspension, without pay, for a period of thirty (30) days. The dates of your suspension are as follows:

July 22, 1985	August 5, 1985	August 19, 1985
July 25, 1985	August 8, 1985	August 22, 1985
July 26, 1985	August 9, 1985	August 23, 1985
July 27, 1985	August 10, 1985	August 24, 1985
July 28, 1985	August 11, 1985	August 25, 1985
July 29, 1985	August 12, 1985	August 26, 1985
August 1, 1985	August 15, 1985	August 29, 1985
August 2, 1985	August 16, 1985	August 30, 1985
August 3, 1985	August 17, 1985	August 31, 1985
August 4, 1985	August 18, 1985	September 1, 1985.

This suspension is for your violation of New Mexico State Police Rules & Regulations, Rule No. 112.0, which reads, "employees shall conduct themselves at all times, both on and off duty, in such a manner as to reflect most favorably on the Department. Conduct unbecoming an employee shall include that which brings the Department into disrepute or reflects discredit upon the employee as a member of the Department, or that which impairs the operation or efficiency of the Department or employee. . .". This violation occurred as the result of the incidents involving your wife, Bernice.

In addition, your admitted violation of the New Mexico Controlled Substances Act constitutes a violation of New Mexico State Police Rules & Regulations, Rule No. 110.1, which reads, "[Employees shall] obey all laws of the United States, or any State and local jurisdiction . . .".

The investigation by the Inspections & Internal Affairs Division reflects that you acknowledge your wrongdoing, but that your actions were the result of, what appears to be severe domestic strife, which does not, however, excuse your actions. Although you may feel this suspension is severe discipline, more severe disciplinary action could possibly have been taken if the Inspections & Internal Affairs Division had found that you have exhibited this type behavior with the public during the course of your duties. The investigation, however, reflects that, since being commissioned as a New

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EXHIBIT

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Mexico State Police Officer, you have performed your duties in a responsible manner. Furthermore, as aforementioned, it is quite evident this has all resulted from your reaction to severe domestic strife, and I now believe you have learned from this experience and such incidents will not reoccur. Regardless, I must remind you that, should any future similar incidents occur, either during the course of this suspension or upon your return to active duty, you can be assured I will not hesitate to process your termination from this Department.

I have requested that Sergeant James Jennings, currently on special assignment with the Inspections & Internal Affairs Division, monitor your actions during the course of your suspension. Therefore, you are hereby directed to contact, via public service, Sergeant Jennings each Monday for the duration of this suspension to assure him that you are conducting yourself responsibly during the course of your suspension.

The investigation by the Inspections & Internal Affairs Division also indicates to me that you may possibly be in need of psychiatric or other counselling, and I am currently considering this matter further. I anticipate that I may, in the future, direct that you seek such counselling for your own well being.

You are to turn in all State-owned equipment to Sergeant Herrera for the duration of this suspension.

Upon return from suspension on September 2, 1985, you will resume your duties as a New Mexico State Police Officer in the Uniformed Bureau, assigned to the Santa Rosa Sub-District. Enclosed herewith you will find your transfer orders.

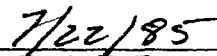
I trust, Officer Rodella, that you will, henceforth, conduct yourself, both on and off duty, in nothing but the most exemplary manner and that I will not be required to take any other disciplinary action.

MLC:er

Enclosure

cc: State Police Board Members
Personnel File


RECEIVED


DATE

Witnessed by SGT. Stan Herrera 7-22-85

NEW MEXICO STATE POLICE DEPARTMENT

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

SUBJECT COMPLAINT LETTER ON OFFICER THOMAS
RODELLA - COMPLAINANT MRS. BERNICE
(GOMEZ) RODELLA

DATE July 17, 1985

FROM SERGEANT JAMES O. JENNINGS *J.O.J.*
Inspections and Internal Affairs

TO CHIEF MAURICE L. CORDOVA

ATTENTION OF

SYNOPSIS:

On June 25, 1985, Captain Eddie Castillo assigned me to investigate the allegations outlined in a complaint letter dated June 20, 1985. The complainant was Mrs. Bernice Rodella and the complaints were directed to Officer Thomas Rodella, her husband, presently assigned to the Governor's Security Division and living in Abiquiu, New Mexico.

DETAILS:

On June 24, 1985, Chief Cordova's office received a letter dated June 20, 1985, from Mrs. Bernice (Gomez) Rodella. In the letter she stated that she had ignored the actions of Officer Rodella, her husband, for the last year, but she thought these problems had to be recognized and brought forth because of the abuse to herself, her family, his job and others who might be involved in the future. The letter outlined several areas of alleged wrongdoings by Officer Thomas Rodella which included physically and brutally attacking her and others, using a gun to intimidate or harrass, using his position and state police equipment to attempt to do bodily harm to others, his problem with alcohol and the fact that he uses marijuana. Mrs. Rodella further stated that she feels she can no longer deal with the physical abuse that she has taken from Officer Rodella and resents being told by Officer Rodella that his father and himself are "The Law" in the county and no one would believe her side of the story anyway. Mrs. Rodella included with her letter a copy of her sick leave record from her place of employment so as to confirm her allegations concerning the physical attacks on herself and the work days missed because of the injuries sustained. Mrs. Rodella said that Officer Rodella has on more than one occasion let the air out of the tires on her vehicles to prevent her from leaving the residence and has changed the locks on the doors at their residence to deny her any entry. She also states that on June 4, 1985, while with Officer

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Rodella she was beaten severely and he attempted to strangle her with a belt. She went to the health center in Cuba, New Mexico on June 5, 1985, to be examined.

On July 8, 1985, I traveled to Cuba, New Mexico and obtained a copy of the medical record that Mrs. Rodella spoke of from the checkerboard area health system, dated June 5, 1985. According to the record, Sylvia Alona, physician's assistant and Dr. Leonard Cain treated her. The report does state that there were numerous bruises on her body and a large bruise on her neck as well as what was diagnosed as swelling in the upper spine area. A copy of the medical report is being retained by this division.

It should be noted that during my investigation, Mrs. Rodella was formally interviewed by myself on two (2) different occasions. The initial interview was on July 8, 1985, and the second interview was conducted on July 11, 1985. During the initial interview Mrs. Rodella stated that the contents of the letter was true and complete. On July 10, 1985, she called me and told me that the letter she had written was false and she wanted to rescind it because the allegations were not true. On July 11, 1985, she again called me and this time stated that she had been forced by Officer Rodella to place the call to me stating that her complaint was not valid. She claimed that she had been beaten up during the altercation and had bruises to confirm the assault. She said that she had been forced to write a letter withdrawing her complaint and this was done against her will and better judgement.

INTERVIEW WITH OFFICER ROBERT CHAVEZ, N.M.S.P.

On June 28, 1985, Captain Eddie Castillo and myself interviewed Officer Robert Chavez who is assigned to district seven, Espanola, New Mexico, about his knowledge of the alleged wrongdoings by Officer Thomas Rodella. Officer Chavez stated that Officer Rodella was his coach officer and he had no knowledge of him abusing alcohol and he never knew of him smoking marijauna or physically abusing anyone. He did recall Mrs. Rodella complaining to him about Officer Rodella hurting her and showed him some bruises on her arms. He stated that he had heard that Officer Rodella had a drinking problem, but had no first hand knowledge of this. Officer Chavez concluded by saying that Mrs. Rodella told him that Officer Rodella becomes violent when he drinks and likes to physically abuse her, also, that he is very jealous of her. A copy of this interview is being held by this division.

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On July 11, 1985, I again interviewed Mrs. Bernice Rodella concerning complaints she had concerning her husband, Officer Thomas Rodella. She claims that on July 9, 1985, Tommy Rodella came to Gallina and helped her family with various jobs. The next morning he asked her to go to Cuba, New Mexico with him for lunch. On the way back from Cuba he became angry with her and broke the windshield in her car, ripped her blouse and slapped her around. He drove her to his home in Abiquiu, New Mexico where she stayed until the next day.

On July 10, 1985, she contends that he forced her to call and tell me that the allegations she had made against him were not true and she wanted to rescind the letter that she wrote to the chief. She stated that he struck her with a large belt until she agreed to make the call and write the letter withdrawing her complaints.

On July 11, 1985, Mrs. Rodella called me and said she had been forced by Officer Thomas Rodella to call and write the letter and she wished to see me again to give another statement concerning his brutality. At the conclusion of the interview I took pictures of the bruises on Mrs. Rodella and the damaged windshield on her vehicle. The statement and pictures are being retained by this division.

INTERVIEW WITH OFFICER RANDY BERTRAM, N.M.S.P.

On July 8, 1985, I interviewed Officer Randy Bertram of the New Mexico State Police who is stationed in Cuba, New Mexico. He stated that on January 30, 1985, he was assigned to go to Gallina, New Mexico and be present at the residence of Bernice Rodella while Tommy Rodella got a vehicle from the residence which he claimed was his. He stated he met Officer Rodella near the residence and he was accompanied by his father, Deputy Sheriff Robert Rodella and one other male subject, who was unknown to Officer Bertram. Officer Bertram stated that Tommy Rodella opened the pickup parked at the residence and found that there was no key in the ignition. He then walked to a Chevrolet Corvette also parked in the yard and he got a key out of his pocket and drove away. According to Officer Bertram, Officer Rodella never entered the residence and was very polite. Mrs. Rodella's father accused them of stealing the car, but Officer Bertram confirmed the vehicle was registered to both Officer Rodella and Mrs. Rodella. Officer Bertram was told that Bernice Rodella was not at home because she was attending a basketball game.

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INTERVIEW WITH LIEUTENANT CLARENCE FILIP, N.M.S.P.

On July 1, 1985, Captain Eddie Castillo interviewed Lieutenant Clarence Filip, assistant district commander of the district seven office in Espanola, New Mexico. Lieutenant Clarence Filip stated that he was aware of the alleged physical abuse on Mrs. Rodella because she had informed him of this on January 6, 1985. She told him that she didn't want to make a report, she just wanted to inform him of the situation. She said that Tommy became violent at times and that they were having problems.

Lieutenant Filip stated he received a call from Mrs. Rodella on February 28, 1985, and she stated that Tommy and her were separated and she was living in Gallina, New Mexico temporarily. She also stated that Tommy was outside her residence at this time and he was breaking into a pickup truck. She stated he had driven his patrol car to her residence and he was not in uniform. Lieutenant Filip called Sergeant Goke and told him to go to Gallina and check on the incident. He said Sergeant Goke had intercepted Officer Rodella and due to the incident Officer Rodella was given a written reprimand by Captain Tarazon. A copy of the letter of reprimand is being retained by this division.

Lieutenant Filip stated that he had no complaints about Officer Rodella's work performance and knew of no instance where he had been under the influence of alcohol or drugs on or off duty.

INTERVIEW WITH MRS. BERNICE (GOMEZ) RODELLA

On July 8, 1985, I interviewed Mrs. Bernice Rodella about the letter she wrote to Chief Cordova complaining about her husband, Officer Tommy Rodella. She stated to me that all of what she complained about was true except that in her letter she said he smoked marijuana quite often and she stated in this interview that she only knew of him smoking marijuana on two (2) occasions. Once in Albuquerque, New Mexico and once in Abiquiu, New Mexico. She said she had filed for a divorce in June and she no longer wanted him around her or her family. She also stated that a girl at the New Mexico State Police complex in Santa Fe, New Mexico, by the name of Naomi was giving Officer Rodella inside information and he knows every move that myself and the Internal Affairs Division makes and has access to all the reports pertaining to his investigation.

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On July 11, 1985, I interviewed Mr. Raymond Cordova, nephew to Bernice Rodella. He stated that in May (exact date unknown) he was with Bernice and Thomas Rodella in their pickup and they had been drinking. A fight broke out between Mr. Cordova and Officer Rodella and at this time Tommy opened the glove box of the truck and removed a .22 caliber pistol. Officer Rodella then grabbed Mr. Cordova by his shirt and pointed the pistol at his face. Mr. Cordova recalls that Officer Rodella did not shoot the gun, but returned it to the glove box and the incident was over. A copy of this statement is being retained by this division.

INTERVIEW WITH OFFICER THOMAS RODELLA, N.M.S.P.

On July 12, 1985, I interviewed Officer Thomas Rodella of the New Mexico State Police concerning the allegations leveled against him by his wife, Bernice (Gomez) Rodella. During this interview we covered all the points that his wife brought out and in essence he agreed with her on all points. He did say that he thought she exaggerated on some points, but he stated that he does at times become violent when he drinks. He has physically abused his wife many times and on occasion he has struck her with a belt. He does admit to smoking marijuana, but states that this was done at her request. He admits to releasing the air out of the tires on her vehicles to prevent her from leaving the residence. He also admits to changing the locks on their residence to deny her any access to it. He stated he did point a pistol at Raymond Cordova, who is the nephew to Bernice Rodella, during an altercation, but he said he knew the gun was unloaded. Officer Thomas Rodella stated that his marriage has been unstable because of Bernice's jealous nature and the fact that she wants to know his every moment and also wants him under foot at all times. He denies ever using his service revolver or any other weapon to intimidate or harrass his wife and he also denies making the statement that he and his father are "The Law" in the county. He stated that he did not force Bernice to call me and ask that the investigation be dropped or forced her to write the letter to Chief Cordova withdrawing her complaint.

Officer Rodella wants to salvage his marriage, but thinks the difference in their ages and the problems he has had with her family have had a negative impact on the situation. He stated that he has quit drinking so as to prove to Bernice that he can control his temper and stated he has smoked marijuana, but Bernice had asked him to do so. When I asked him about a transfer from his present duty station he thought that it was doubtful as to whether this might correct the problems with his wife.

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He thought if a transfer was in order, he should be given his choice of duty stations so he would be happy and possibly his wife and himself could patch things up in their marriage.

Officer Rodella stated that if he could he would like to salvage his marriage, even in the light of the fact that his wife has filed for a divorce and if he is given the ultimatum of choosing between his wife and his job, he would give up his job. He also stated he needs more time with his wife to patch up their differences and has not been afforded the time he needs from his present assignment with Governor's Security. A copy of the taped interview with Officer Thomas Rodella is being retained by this division for future reference.

CONCLUSION:

Upon concluding my investigation, I have found that Officer Thomas Rodella did in fact commit the crime of smoking marijuana while off duty. He did do bodily harm to his wife on more than on occasion by physically assaulting her and he did use a weapon (pistol) to threaten another person during an altercation in which he was under the influence of alcohol. My findings are based on statements obtained from his wife, by Officer Rodella's own admission and by others knowledgeable of the facts in this investigation.

Officer Thomas Rodella violated the following rules and regulations:

110.1 Obey all laws of the United States, or any State and local jurisdiction in which the employees are present;

Penalty - 172.0 Like offenses.

172.0 Offenses not included in the following list shall result in penalties similar to those specified for listed offenses of comparable seriousness. These are the penalties which will be imposed for these offenses and for similar, unlisted offenses, unless the Chief or Board decide otherwise. Charges and penalties are not limited to these listed violations.

Like offenses is State Statute 30-31-23-B1; Controlled Substance; Possession Prohibited.

112.0 Employees shall conduct themselves at all times, both on and off duty, in such a manner as to reflect most favorably on the

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Department. Conduct unbecoming an employee shall include that which brings the Department into disrepute or reflects discredit upon the employee as a member of the Department, or that which impairs the operation or efficiency of the Department or employee. These shall include but not be limited to the following:

Violation of Rule 112.0 has a penalty of reprimand to thirty (30) days.

RECOMMENDATION:

Due to the seriousness of the crime and the violations involved in this matter, I would recommend that Officer Thomas Rodella be compelled to seek psychiatric counseling. I, also, recommend that he be suspended no less than thirty (30) days and that he be transferred to a duty station in the southern zone, so he might resolve his problems and not to be influenced by family and friends.

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This is an interview with Bernice Rodella. I'm Sergeant James Jennings. The date is July the 11th, 1985. The time is 5:14 p.m. Also present during the interview is Captain Eddie Castillo.

JENNINGS: Mrs. Rodella, would you relate to me what has transpired between you and your husband, Officer Tommy Rodella since I last saw you Monday morning of this week?

RODELLA: Tommy came over Monday afternoon and he basically he went to my sister's house. He went to work first where I work, and then he went to my sister's house and asked me to go over. I went over to just acted like there was nothing wrong and that everything was okay. And that afternoon he and well, I guess my brother-in-law and my nephew went out to get some hay and that was about the extent of that that afternoon. He stayed here that night and the next morning he asked me if ... he asked me not to go to work that he needed to ... to talk to me and

JENNINGS: Now, this would have been Tuesday morning, right?

RODELLA: Tuesday morning. And he asked me to go have lunch with him in Cuba. So we went on to Cuba and after we had lunch out there he met up with two of the officers out there which told him that you had been out there on Monday.

JENNINGS: Do you know which two ... which two officers that could have been?

RODELLA: Jerry Chavez and Paul Mares and I talked to Paul Mares just a few minutes and when Tommy returned back to the car to talk to me. He was kind of mad and he said, "What did Paul tell you." And I said, "Tell you about me." And I said, "He didn't tell me anything about you, we didn't talk about you." And he was real quiet all the way and up to ... to the junction of 112 and 96 he kept it going on to on 112 and I asked him where are you going and he says, "Show you who I am." So then he stopped the car on the dirt road and tore the buttons off my shirt and punched the windshield off the car and busted it. And he started slapping me around. And I told him I had to come back to work that afternoon. So he finally let me ... you know let me go and said, "Okay, I'll drive you back to ... to work." And that afternoon he waited for me and he told me that I was going back home with him to Abiquiu. So he waited for me and he made sure that I followed him and right about around Youngsville, I remembered that I had forgotten some letters at school and that I needed.

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RODELLA: So I blinked my lights and I asked him to stop and I told him, "I'll be back, I'll ... I'm going to pick up this letter." And he said, "Well, you are not going by yourself, I'm going with you." So he got in the car and just as we came up he was ... he was just made I guess. And I told him, "Well, Tommy you know I've told you let's ... you know let's just split." You know "What are you doing together you know if we can't you know get along." And he said, "You are not reading me." And I told you, "You are not leaving me." And I said, "Well, why did you pop the windshield off the car?" And he just started punching at me when I mentioned that to him. And I was driving and he was just hitting me and slapping all over the place. And I said, "Well, didn't you have enough with breaking the windshield." He said, "I'll even break the transmission of the car if you want me to." So then we drove on into Gallina and he pushed me all over the place till got to the office. When I picked up those letters. We got back in the car and we just kept on going past Youngsville. He didn't even pick up his truck there. He left it there. And just as we got to Abiquiu he told me, "You are going to come that close to death Bernice, I'm really let you have it this time." "You have played long enough with me." He just kept on and on the way and slapping me and just punching me and we got up to Abiquiu and right in front of Bodies there was two (2) police cars there. So he just kept on going past Abiquiu and then he stopped on the side of the road and kind of waited for those police officers to go by and then we returned back to the house. And when we got to the house he told me, "you are going to get it, you are going to get it." But he didn't do anything to me that night. He didn't ... he didn't punch me till the next morning. He told me, Well, I said, "I have to go to work." He said, "You are not going until you have make that call." I said, "Tommy I can't call." "I'm not going to call." "I've already written that letter and that's where I stand." He says, "you are going to call." I said, "I'm not going to call." And he just kept going at it and he says, "Well, if you are not." And he got this huge belt that he had and he started hitting me with hit.

JENNINGS: You mentioned it before that he had hit you with

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JENNINGS: a belt. Does he do this often?

RODELLA: Yes.

JENNINGS: With the same belt?

RODELLA: Yes. A huge thing that's he got.

JENNINGS: Do you feel intimidated or do you feel harrassed by him generally when you are around him or are there moments or days or times when there is no problem with Officer Rodella, your husband?

RODELLA: Anymore I can't tell. You know he ... he'll just get into this mood, but lately it's just been an everyday accord.

JENNINGS: Has he ... has he that he is having trouble at work or has anything been to the point where he is frustrated in taking his frustrations out on you. Do you think?

RODELLA: I've often asked him you know, "Do you want to talk about something or you know, would you like to talk about some thing?" If he is having problems with something, I don't know what's it's all about."

JENNINGS: I talked to you yesterday morning which was Wednesday July 10, 1985 when you called me at the office and that is when you told me that you were going to send a letter and rescinding the letter that you had written earlier saying that the claims that you had made were not right and that you were going to ...you were in so many words exonerating your husband of any ... of any wrongdoing that he may have committed in your eyes. Where were you at when you made this call and why did you make the call?

RODELLA: I was in Abiquiu and I was forced to do it by him. I just ... I couldn't take the beatings anymore so I gave in. I said, "I'll call."

JENNINGS: Did you ... you told me that the letter would be mailed that day and that the chief should be receiving it today which was Thursday or Friday tomorrow. You wrote the letter also and this was not of your free will?

RODELLA: It was not of my free will.

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JENNINGS: And in this letter which I do not have a copy of yet, you deny that you ... you say that ... you say that the original letter was false. Is this true?

RODELLA: What I'm ... what I said in the letter was that I wished to withdrawn the complaint letter that I had sent in on June 20th.

JENNINGS: Have you at any point in time during your acquaintance with and your marriage to Tommy Rodella ever filed a criminal complaint for assault or attempted to get a restraining order preventing him from coming around your presence or your property?

RODELLA: I hadn't thought about filing a criminal complaint again him. I did talk to my attorney about getting retraining order, but at that time he moved into Santa Fe, so I figured you know he was going to be here in Santa Fe so I wouldn't need it. So I told him you know just forget about the restraining order, but he had set one up for me.

JENNINGS: Okay, as far as the ... the fact that he has assaulted you and so forth, do you know of any other incidents since you have known him or known of him whether he acts in a violent nature?

RODELLA: No. other than you know with me.

JENNINGS: You told me during the interview Monday that you didn't know of him drinking on duty or you could not recall anytime that he would drink on duty. Do you still stand by this.

RODELLA: Yes.

JENNINGS: You also told me that he had smoked marijuana in your presence twice. Once in Abiquiu and once in Albuquerque. Are there any more times that you can recall or were there any other people present?

RODELLA: No.

JENNINGS: You also contend that he ran you off the road on more than one occasion. One time with his police car. Is this also the truth to the best of your knowledge.

RODELLA: Yes, it is.

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JENNINGS: Captain Castillo do you have any questions to ask?

CASTILLO: Bernice, when he made you make those phone calls who did you place the phone calls to?

RODELLA: Yesterday?

CASTILLO: Whenever you called Santa Fe. Remember you mentioned to me

RODELLA: Oh, to you?

CASTILLO: To me.

RODELLA: Or what? Which calls are you referring to?

CASTILLO: The ones that you said that he made you call?

RODELLA: Well, he had ... he had gone into my office on Tuesday and he said, "Call, call right now cause I want to be present." "I want to hear what you have to say." And I called and I asked for you and the girl told me that you wouldn't be in until Thursday and that you were out and that you wouldn't be in until the following day. So he was listening and he said, "Well, are you going to call Jennings." "Cause he's going to be in." Jennings is going to be in. So I think that's why he made go over on Tuesday afternoon so I could call yesterday.

CASTILLO: And he was present both times

RODELLA: Yes, he was. He was present.

CASTILLO: Okay.

JENNINGS: So you went to Abiquiu with him Tuesday afternoon and stayed the night at his mobile home there in Abiquiu and made the call Wednesday morning to me.

RODELLA: Yes.

JENNINGS: Were you forced to go to Abiquiu with him and were you forced to spend the night with him against your will?

RODELLA: Well, he drove ... he drove my car. Took the keys out of the car and hid my purse the minute we got there so I had no way of running out. I wasn't even going to try actually.

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CASTILLO: Are you afraid of Tommy Rodella?

RODELLA: Actually like I told you ... I guess I told you Monday that I wasn't afraid of him anymore, but I sure am.

JENNINGS: What do you think the state police should do in an instance of this ... in the fact that you are married and this could be determined a domestic disturbance problem. How do you think the state police could ... could best serve your needs and Officer Rodella's needs in this crisis?

RODELLA: I don't know. I tried explaining to him cause he asked me "Well, why did you write that letter?" And I said, "I was hoping Tommy I says, that you would get it (Inaudible) straightened out. You know. Realized what you are doing and either quit ... quit you know your not your job, but ... I've never asked him to quit his job. But you know his behavior. So he could straighten out his behavior.

JENNINGS: Have you ever asked him to submit to psychological evaluations due to the problem that he may or may not have?

RCDELLA: No, I have not.

JENNINGS: I have no further questions unless you do Captain Castillo.

CASTILLO: No questions.

JENNINGS: Mrs. Rodella do you have anything further to add to this interview?

RCDELLA: I sure don't.

JENNINGS: The interview will then conclude at 5:27 p.m. on July the 11th, 1985.

This is an interview with Bernice Rodella. I'm Sergeant James Jennings with the New Mexico State Police. The interview is being conducted on July the 8th, 1985. The time is now 1:00 p.m.

JENNINGS: Mrs. Rodella I'm here to speak with you about a letter that you addressed to Chief Cordova dated June the 20th, 1985 whereas you make mention of the fact that Officer Tomrmy Rodella your husband has physically and mentally abused you through the prior months. Also made mention of alcohol abuse and the use of the drug marijuana. On occasions. I'd like to go through this complaint letter with you and let you address some of these things that you have mentioned. The ... and you have them numbered. As of ... as on the first occasion you mentioned on December 17th, 1984, you mentioned that Officer Rodella took you out of your residence in Abiquiu and drove you to state road 84 and pulled you out of the car by your hair and left lying on the roadway. And threatened to shoot you with his service revolver if you didn't walk back home. You asked him not to shoot you because of your children. After this incident or beating you were unable to work for two days. Is this a true account of the incident Mrs. Rodella?

RODELLA: Yes, it is.

JENNINGS: Uh ... you mentioned that he pulled you out of the car by your hair and left you lying on the roadway. Did he physically abuse you at this time? Did he beat you up with his fist.? Did he kick or how did he ... how did he abuse you?

RODELLA: He just punched me out.

JENNINGS: With his fist?

RODELLA: With his fist. Kicked me and just about everything. Pulled my hair.

JENNINGS: Okay, you mentioned that he threatened you with his service revolver was he in uniform at this time?

RODELLA: No, he wasn't.

JENNINGS: Did he carry ... does he carry his uniform ... Uh ... his service revolver with him on ... on many occasions?

RODELLA: No. No, not on too many occasions.

JENNINGS: So he just happened to have his service revolver with him on this occasion when he was off. And he threatened

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JENNINGS: to shoot you with the gun. Is this true?

RODELLA: Yes.

JENNINGS: Was this at night or during the day?

RODELLA: It was at night.

JENNINGS: Did Uh ... on ... on the second occasion you mentioned on January the 5th, 1985, you said that he was acting strangely and you left the house and upon your return the locks had been changed. When you returned later in the day that you found vehicles to be flat. What vehicles are you referring to?

RODELLA: I'm referring to the Bronco and the Corvette.

JENNINGS: Okay. When you mentioned ... when you say flat were the tires damaged or was the air just let out of the tires?

RODELLA: The air was let out of the tires.

JENNINGS: Okay, did you let anybody know about this incident at all on this day?

RODELLA: Uh ... the next day I advised Lieutenant Filip what had happened.

JENNINGS: Did you see him in person or call him on the phone?

RODELLA: I talked to him on the phone first and then I went into the office.

JENNINGS: Okay. Did you tell him about anything else on this date. Anything about the physical abuse that had occurred to you? Or anything of the happenings in the past when you and your husband Officer Rodella?

RODELLA: No, he just asked me if we were having problems between us. I guess he kind of asked me is he was abusing me and I said, "yes."

JENNINGS: Okay, on item number three in your letter you state that on February the 9th, 1985 he beat you up again. When you say again are you indicating that this was these beatings were on a regular basis and had occurred many times in the past? Or once before in the past or what exactly do you ... do you mean?

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RODELLA: It was a pattern. This has happened before.

JENNINGS: Does this pattern that you refer to normally occur when he has been drinking or when he is upset because of an argument whether he's been drinking or sober or could you give me ... relate to me when and why these things occur?

RODELLA: At first I thought that they were because of the drinking, but after a while it didn't matter whether he had been drinking or not. So I really couldn't you know say whether it was because of his drinking or why it was.

JENNINGS: On February the 9th, here this item number 3, do you remember what provoked the argument that you had or why he abused you at this time?

RODELLA: I can't remember.

JENNINGS: On February the 28th, 1985, your item number four you state that again this time he had his service revolver pointed at your face bruising you badly. Do you recall why the argument started then?

RODELLA: It's that incident that I talked to you about where he ... we had an argument and I said, "I'm leaving." And I asked him, "What do you want." And he said, "You take everything with you." And I asked him, "Do I take the pickup." He said, "Everything" and I brought everything cause I wasn't working. And uh ... around that time he ... he decided that he needed transportation. So he was going to pick up the truck from Gallina. And he tried breaking in because I would not let him have the key. So that's when my father and my brothers walked out and asked him to leave ... not to break in. If anybody knew that that wasn't right, it should be him.

JENNINGS: On this occasion now when you had the argument, you were at his mobile home in Abiquiu. Is this not true?

RODELLA: Yes. That's correct. I was in Abiquiu.

JENNINGS: Okay, later that evening you've related to me that he came to your home in ... in Gallina and he tried to break into the pickup?

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RODELLA: First he went in the house. My son was in there. I was at my mother's house and he asked, "Where's your mom and Patrick said, "I guess she's ... she's at grandma's house." And he went through my purse and he took all the keys to the other vehicles. But the one to the pickup I had it in my pocket.

JENNINGS: Okay. Who is the pickup ... is it in joint registration between you and him?

RODELLA: Yes, it was.

JENNINGS: So, it would ... it was actually his pickup as well.

RODELLA: Yes, it was.

JENNINGS: On item number 5 you contend that on March 21st, 1985, while attending the state basketball tournaments he took you out on the parking lot of the Civic and started beating you. He stopped when he realized your father was watching. Can you tell me why he took you out of the Civic Auditorium and began beating you and did you see your father watch this beating that you took?

RODELLA: Well, I can't tell you why he was mad, but you know he was mad that day for some reason and he (Inaudible for a couple of words). Uh

JENNINGS: Had he been drinking on this occasion?

RODELLA: Uh ... I'm sure he had. I'm not saying that he was drunk, but I'm sure he had been drinking. And the reason I say my father saw something was that he was walking right behind us and we were arguing. He was pushing me around, but I knew my father wasn't going to go up to him and tell him to leave me alone and then he went and sat in the pickup. So I know that my father must have seen something. And Tommy was aware that my father was around.

JENNINGS: Okay, you left the civic center and you drove out on the interstate and he just abused me again. Did he physically punch you, kick you, and in the vehicle or what happened then?

RODELLA: In the vehicle while he was driving he kept my hair and punching me till he finally stopped the car.

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RODELLA: And he just let me have it. And by have it I mean punching me everywhere. Pulling my hair.

JENNINGS: Okay, the next day you were still in Albuquerque and you said, we again argued and he started at me again this time he hit me until I passed out. Was this at a motel room?

RODELLA: No, this was at my home in Albuquerque.

JENNINGS: You say when you came back I begged him to leave me alone or take me to the hospital cause I couldn't even walk.

RODELLA: Yes, it was.

JENNINGS: How long did you stay off work because of this or did you miss work because of this?

RODELLA: I did miss work because of this and it must of been a couple of days that I was out.

JENNINGS: Okay. Your work record indicates that on March the 21st and 22nd it indicated taht you were at a tournament.

RODELLA: Uh ... huh.

JENNINGS: On your sick leave record and on the 25th and the 26th it indicates that you were again missed, but it gives no reason. Does either one of the days have anything to do with the incident?

RODELLA: Both.

JENNINGS: You are speaking of the 21st and 22nd?

RODELLA: I'm speaking of the 25th and the 26th.

JENNINGS: Okay. Did he offer to take you to the hospital that day or did you ever go to the hospital or to a doctor?

RODELLA: No, I didn't go. He told me he was leaving. That Uh ... that I would never see him again. He was going to leave and then all of sudden he decided that he wasn't to leave. But I did tell him that I would be going to the hospital if he left me. Because of the condition that I was in. And he finally decided, No, we should come back to Abiquiu and try to work things out. Then that night we drove back to Abiquiu. And I did not go to the hospital or to a doctor.

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JENNINGS: Okay. That was the incident in Albuquerque on March 21st and on March 22nd. Right?

RODELLA: That's correct.

JENNINGS: Okay. You stated on April the 6th, 1985 he was called by some of his friends to a party at Canones. According to your item number six. He was on duty and he asked you to go with him in which you did. On the way to the party he began to argue and by the time you arrived at the residence in Canones you decided not to leave the vehicle and you waited in his unit. "I waited for awhile, but figured that the music and the noise ... by the music and the noise that he wouldn't be coming out soon." So you walked to a friends home and returned to your place in Abiquiu. You found the vehicle to be ... have flat tires. You knew that he would beat you up on his return needless to say a repeat of his behavior. Is this a true account of what happened that night?

RODELLA: That's correct.

JENNINGS: And upon his return to your home there in Abiquiu that night did he again beat you up?

RODELLA: Yes, he did.

JENNINGS: Was anyone else with him when he arrived at your house?

RODELLA: No, there was no one with him.

JENNINGS: Was he working this evening?

RODELLA: Yes, he was.

JENNINGS: Had he been drinking when he arrived home?

RODELLA: No. No.

JENNINGS: On your item number 7 on May 2nd, 1985, while you visited with your sister at her home in Gallina you say that he became pretty drunk and he decided that he was going to try out his truck and invited your nephew and yourself and you said he drove like a maniac and you tried to talk him to slowing down and he got into a argument and started fighting and pulled out a gun and pointed it at his head. He warned your nephew to keep quiet because he and his father had full control of the county and nobody better mess with him. Is this true?

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RODELLA: That is correct.

JENNINGS: At this time during the altercation did he ... did he ever fire the weapon or what type of weapon was it?

RODELLA: It was a .22.

JENNINGS: Was it his weapon or was it someone elses?

RODELLA: It's mine. And good thing that it had no bullets in it. But he kept cocking it at his head.

JENNINGS: Was it a revolver or an automatic? Semi automatic pistol?

RODELLA: It's a

JENNINGS: Did the cylinder revolve or was it

RODELLA: Yes.

JENNINGS: Did he ... he did make reference that evening that him and his father were the law and he had full control of the county and that nobody could touch him. Is this true?

RODELLA: That's correct.

JENNINGS: Did he make mention of this quite often?

RODELLA: He ... he made mention of it to me on several occasions to it that night. He Uh ... he mentioned it to me.

JENNINGS: And what is your nephew's name?

RODELLA: Raymond Cordova.

JENNINGS: Does he live here in Gallina?

RODELLA: Yes, he does.

JENNINGS: Do you remember any other incidents where he pulled the gun out other than the one on yourself and on your nephew where he attempted to use a gun or had a gun in his possession and became angry and threatened to use the gun?

RODELLA: More than once.

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JENNINGS: On your incident number eight. You say that on May the 10th, 1985, while vacationing in California he became angry and grabbed a wire hanger and started hitting you and tearing your clothes and kicking you around. You say there you couldn't get in touch with anyone. Did you go to a doctor or see anyone in the medical profession because of this beating?

RODELLA: No, I didn't.

JENNINGS: Did he threaten you at this time about keeping quiet? Or has he ever told you that you better not say anything to anyone?

RODELLA: Yes, all the time. This is constantly.

JENNINGS: Were you bruised because of the beating that you took on this day? May 10th?

RODELLA: Very badly bruised. My legs especially.

JENNINGS: On May the 22nd, 1985, which you term as an eye opener. He contacted you at work and advised you that you better beware when you got home that evening. Would you relate to me what happened that day?

RODELLA: Uh ... he had called me here at work to tell me that ... we had gone out that weekend before the 22nd and we had gone out to Chama and we had a little incident happen to us and anyway. On May 22nd this lady called him and apologized for what had happened and he called me to tell me this. And he started accusing me that I was seeing someone else. And I got angry and I hung up on him. I said, "I don't have time like that to argue with you at work." And he called me back and he said, "Don't you ever hang up on me." And you better watch out cause this evening you are going to get when you come home." So you know I thought one of his games, But then I thought I can't take a chance anymore. So I tried getting a hold of Officer Chavez and I talked to his fiance and asked her to have him return my call here at work. And later on that day I decided I needed to do something. Take care of some business before anything else would happen. Which was basically changing my car titles back to my original name and going to the bank taking some business that I had there. And I went on to Espanola and I did this. And upon my return to Abiquiu I ... he was there at the house and he was just taking off in his patrol car and he saw me go by. I didn't dare stop. So he followed me. He tried running me off the road. So I turned as fast as I could. And

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RODELLA: I thought well, I don't have ... stand a chance coming this way. There's no traffic going towards Espanola if anything happens to me. So I turned and headed on back to Espanola and he followed me and once I got to Espanola he signaled me to stop. And I stopped. And then we talked for awhile and that's is when I was going ... he told me to go back home. "I'll be there after awhile." So I came on home. And when we got home the same thing happened again.

JENNINGS: Did he Uh ... say anything to you that evening about ... about he didn't care who found out about this he was going to abuse you again and again.

RODELLA: Yeah, he told me he says, I asked him, "Tommy, if you just let me leave, I'll leave." And he said, "No, Bernice I'm not using you or abusing you."

JENNINGS: Did you tell him that you had been to Lieutenant Filip?

RODELLA: No, he never knew about this. Cause if he would have known he would have probably just ... and when he found out about Officer Chavez he made it hard on Officer Chavez too. I really didn't want to involve anyone else because ... and he kept telling me after he found out that I had contacted Officer Chavez. He kept telling me "Yeah, you, Lieutenant Filip and Robert are to screw me." "You really want to screw me." (Inaudible). So

JENNINGS: You say that on your number 10 on May 30th, 1985, he called you go to Abiquiu and talk ... excuse me on May 30th,

RODELLA: I left ...

JENNINGS: You left Officer Rodella.

RODELLA: I left him. By left I mean I packed my stuff and you know ... A few things that I had and ...and I left.

JENNINGS: Okay. And ... and you say that on June 4th, he called you to talk and you went to his mobile home in Abiquiu and at this time what happened?

RODELLA: He just started pushing me around and beating me up with a humongous belt he had. And he wrapped it around my throat. My neck. My neck area. And he tried strangling me.

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JENNINGS: Did you Uh ... did you pass out at this time or

RODELLA: No, I didn't. I ... they asked me the same question at the Cuba Health Center if I passed out. I did not pass out. I was trying ... I was trying to fight it. I was trying to fight the pressure on my neck.

JENNINGS: Uh ... when did you go to the Cuba Health Center for treatment?

RODELLA: On June the 5th. My sister Martha took me. Her and her husband took me to the clinic that night.

JENNINGS: What is your sister's name?

RODELLA: Martha Corriz.

JENNINGS: Does she live here in Gallina as well?

RODELLA: Yes, she does.

JENNINGS: You said in your letter to the chief's office that he's intimidated you to the point that you are running scared. You said, he threatened to kill you and your family if they got involved. And he stated time and time again that no officer would believe me anyway and in this country he would get away with murder. Is this true?

RODELLA: No, in the county of Rio Arriba. Meaning the county of Rio Arriba.

JENNINGS: Has any of his family ever contacted you? His father or any of his other family?

RODELLA: No. As a matter of a fact his mom and I get along very well. And on number eight I went to her and I showed her the bruises on my body because I said if anything happens I want you to know that this is what I have been getting. She agreed with me telling me that I should do something about it at that time cause she herself had ... had taken beatings from her husband at one time. And she said, "And I don't want you to go through the same thing you know that I had gone through." So I do talk to her and I do get along with her very well. The father I don't have nothing to do with him.

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JENNINGS: You stated that when he drinks the problem is compounded especially smokes marijuana. How often does drink. Have you ever seen him drink on duty?

RODELLA: No, I haven't.

JENNINGS: How often does he drink?

RODELLA: Oh, this is usually on his days off.

JENNINGS: Does he drink to excess normally?

RODELLA: Uh ... I would say so.

JENNINGS: And how many times have you seen him or are you aware of him smoking marijuana?

RODELLA: I guess I probably blew it a little a bit there, but I have seen him smoke it twice.

JENNINGS: And where was this at?

RODELLA: Uh ... once in Albuquerque at my home in Albuquerque and once in Abiquiu.

JENNINGS: Do you know where he obtained the marijuana from?

RODELLA: I have no idea.

JENNINGS: You stated in your letter to the chief that you realized that his family is the law as he says. As he said and he will do anything to get even with ... with you and your family. Is this true?

RODELLA: Yes.

JENNINGS: Has he told you this frequently?

RODELLA: Yes, as a matter of a fact he rubs it in quite often that he's got it ... you know he's got it made with his father, with his uncles which was a ex-state policeman. And that

JENNINGS: What is his uncles name?

RODELLA: Leo. I mean I just don't stand a chance. And he's asked ... asked me quite often. "Bernice why don't you move from Gallina and get out of here." "Get away."

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JENNINGS: Who has asked you that?

RODELLA: Tommy has. You know when we have argued and tried to talk about things. We can't make it, you know get out." So you know to me it's ...he's warning me about something.

JENNINGS: Have you contact with your husband Tommy since you wrote the letter?

RODELLA: Yes, I have.

JENNINGS: Do you recall when it was?

RODELLA: I've seen him and I've talked to him as late this morning. He called me and he told me that he knew that someone from your office would be coming down and that he wanted me to tell them that everything that I had written this letter was a lie.

JENNINGS: And he told you that this morning on the phone?

RODELLA: Well, he's been telling me off and on, but he reminded me this morning that I should tape this conversation.

JENNINGS: Did he call you?

RODELLA: Yes, he called me. And that I should tape this conversation and that I should take the tape to him so he could hear it. And that I better tell you that everything I wrote here is a lie.

JENNINGS: What did you tell him?

RODELLA: I told him that I would try. Cause that's all I could say. I just don't want to argue with him. And in many times I told him, "Hey, I'll do it." I just didn't want ... I just knew what would happen.

JENNINGS: Did he threaten you at all today on the phone about the interview that would be conducted with you if you ... if you failed to do what he told you?

RODELLA: He didn't threaten me, but I can ... I can sense it. He didn't tell me "You are going to be sorry." Or anything like this. It's the way he worded it. He wanted me to tape it and take to him. You know so he could hear what I had said.

JENNINGS: Since you have been ... when did you get married

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JENNINGS: to Tommy Rodella?

RODELLA: November the 10th, 1984.

JENNINNGS: Did he beat you at all before you became married?

RODELLA: One time last year. It was in August and I went to Mexico without letting him know. And when I got back he asked me where I had been. And I said, "Well, you don't have to know where I have been." And we were on the way to T.A. and he stopped on the middle of the road. I had some film of pictures that I had taken in Mexico and he just threw them out the window. And he found out where I had been and he just ... he slapped me quite a bit. But at that time I thought well, he's mad because I didn't tell him where I was going. And after that you know I could just see it. You know. Well, actually after we got married I could see it. For anything little thing that happened. He didn't need a reason.

JENNINGS: Have you filed for a legal separation or divorce at all?

RODELLA: Yes, I have.

JENNINGS: When did you do this?

RODELLA: Uh ... I can't remember when I did this. Sometime in the early part of June. I believe.

JENNINGS: You filed for divorce?

RODELLA: Yes, I did.

JENNINGS: Is he aware of this?

RODELLA: Yes, he is. Cause that girl also told him that ...

JENNINGS: When you refer to this girl would you ... would tell me a little bit about this. Are you talking about the girl at the state police office?

RODELLA: Yes, I am. I'll tell ... And I'll tell you what I went up to Tommy's house last week sometime and I had no sooner when the phone rang and they started talking about someone that was in an accident and they were trying to get to him and she told him that

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RODELLA: yes that she thought that there might even be a tap on the phone. And ... and that this certain person whoever they were referring to had seen our divorce in the paper and was showing everybody there at the state police complex. I then asked him who ... who is this girl and he told me that it was a girl that he had met and that she was keeping him posted on everything that was going on. Everytime you people would contact me. Every phone call that you would make. She would make a note of it and let him know. And let him know, I guess.

JENNINGS: Did he give you her name?

RODELLA: Yes, well, he gave me a name. I don't know if that's the name. But he did give me a name.

JENNINGS: What was that name?

RODELLA: Naomi.

JENNINGS: Did he say where she worked or who she worked for there at the state police?

RODELLA: I asked him what department that she worked at because I wanted to make sure that next time I have a complaint or any kind of ... that she doesn't get a hold of it. And he told me that she worked under where the files or something like that. That she had access to personnel files.

JENNINGS: How many times approximately would you say that he has physically abused you since you have known him?

RODELLA: I really couldn't even count them. Count them if I wanted to.

JENNINGS: And you stated earlier sometimes he abuses you when he's been drinking and sometimes when he's not drinking.

RODELLA: That's right.

JENNINGS: It doesn't matter?

RODELLA: It doesn't matter anymore.

JENNINGS: Are the arguments primarily over money, over vehicles, over ... over your activities when you are not around him. What ... what generally provokes arguments?

RODELLA: What generally provokes the arguments is that if he wants me to get rid of everything that I got. He Uh ...

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RODELLA: that's basically it. He wants me to get of everything I have. That I own. And think that's it.

JENNINGS: Do you have anything further to add to this interview, Mrs. Rodella?

RODELLA: Nothing other than like I say, I felt rather bad knowing that I wrote this letter and ... and someone got a hold of it and told him everything that

JENNINGS: The time is 1:31 p.m. on July the 8th, 1985. The tape was just changed from side one to side two. Mrs. Rodella would you again tell me ... repeat the statement that you just made?

RODELLA: What I was saying was that I was concerned because of the letter that I had written and the confidentiality or whatever basically was I guess (Inaudible) of the department.

JENNINGS: Okay. Your complaint to the state police is this. Your husband Officer Tommy Rodella has physically and mentally abused you and that part of this has happened you feel while he is on duty and part of it while he is off duty. You also contend that the ... the use of alcohol and marijuana has been part of the scenario and also that the information that you have been giving the state police in the form of the complaint has been made know to him point by point and that it has not been confidential. Is this true?

RODELLA: Yes.

JENNINGS: Do you have anything further that you would like to add to the interview or to say at this time Mr. Rodella?

RODELLA: No, I guess that's it.

JENNINGS: What would you term just and proper ... what would you term a just proper solution to this problem between you and your husband, Officer Rodella?

RODELLA: The only solution to the problem ... to my problem you know ... as far as getting a divorce or whatever has been taken care of. But what I am afraid of is that you know it's not going to stop at that. That's what I am concerned with. It's not going to stop at that.

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JENNINGS: Have you contemplated getting a restraining order against him visiting or your family on your property or any other time?

RODELLA: Well, he is so sharp that he probably wouldn't do it. He would have somebody else you know do whatever he had to do to me. And he would ... after this letter I'm sure he's going to want to get revenge. Some way or another.

JENNINGS: Does he know about the letter that you wrote ... does ... has he ever seen it that you know of?

RODELLA: I showed it to him. Because he told me that he knew what was in it. He told me that he was going to read it. And I said, "Yeah, I'll show it to you." "I'm Not afraid." "I'll show it." I showed it to him. He's got a copy of it. Cause I gave him a copy.

JENNINGS: You gave him a copy of the letter?

RODELLA: I gave him a copy of the letter after he told me that that ... this girl had basically ... well, he ... he went step by step telling me what was in the letter. Yeah, I'll give you a copy myself. I said.

JENNINGS: You knew that he no longer works on patrol out of the Espanola District. Did you not?

RODELLA: Yes, I do.

JENNINGS: Has he ever confronted you with the fact that he has a new job and more power or anything of this nature?

RODELLA: Uh ... not in so many words, but not directly, but indirectly I would say.

JENNINGS: Are you still afraid of Officer Rodella at this time?

RODELLA: No, I'm not. Not anymore.

JENNINGS: When you went to the clinic in Cuba, who did you see there?

RODELLA: I went to the emergency room and I can't remember who the man was that saw me.

JENNINGS: Was this a doctor or a physician's assistant or what?

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RODELLA: A p.a. (physician's assistant).

JENNINGS: They do have a record of the x-rays and so forth that they took there.

RODELLA: Uh ... huh.

JENNINGS: You have a bruise on your left forearm. Is this a bruise that was caused from any confrontation that you may have had with Officer Rodella?

RODELLA: Yes.

JENNINGS: When was it. Do you recall?

RODELLA: It was July 1st.

JENNINGS: Did he come to your house at that time?

RODELLA: He Uh ... we came over. I came to show him a copy of the letter that I had written and he read it and he just got furious and he pushed me (Inaudible) and he beat me up. And (Inaudible) and he tried to get into my desk to see what else he could find. And I locked it as fast I could and he cut his finger somewhere.

JENNINGS: This was here in your office at the administration office ... school office here at Gallina?

RODELLA: Yes, this was after work and I came to pick up a little (Inaudible). To show it to him and let him know that I had written a letter. And I went back to Abiquiu with him to take them back and he didn't let me come back that day. So the next day I had to come and work and he told me, "No, you are not go work." And later on that afternoon ... I told him, Tommy, I said, "You better realize that I have made up my mind that I am going to let people know what you have done to me." And I have to Tommy that girls name is going to come up. And he got mad and he started pulling my hair and puched me and gave me a black eye. I'm just barely getting rid of it now.

JENNINGS: And the bruise on your arm was caused by him?

RODELLA: Yes, it was.

JENNINGS: It's on your left forearm?

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RODELLA: Right.

JENNINGS: Okay, was this when he grabbed you or when he hit you?

RODELLA: I really don't know.

JENNINGS: When you said on that occasion he did both. He grabbed you and he hit you?

RODELLA: Uh ... huh.

JENNINGS: Do you have anything further to add?

RODELLA: Only that he's been trying to talk me into trying to tell me that there is no truth to that letter.

JENNINGS: And what are you telling me here today?

RODELLA: And I'm telling you that there is. That everything that I wrote there is true. Except for that item number ... it's not an item it's just where it says that he has a drinking problem and it is compounded by which happens quite often and what I meant to say is this ... his behavior happens quite often. Not smoking marijuana. It happens quite often. And that he drinks quite often.

JENNINGS: He does drink quite often, but you have see smoke marijuana on two (2) occasions?

RODELLA: Right.

JENNINGS: Mrs. Rodella I can't ask you administratively nor can I demand that you take a polygraph examination, but on the information that you have afforded me here. Would you take a polygraph examination if afforded one to ... concerning the facts that you have given me here today?

RODELLA: I guess.

JENNINGS: Okay, the interview will end at 1:38 p.m. on July the 8th, 1985.

003 JUN 24 PM 4: 21

June 20, 1985

Chief Maurice Cordova
New Mexico State Police
P.O. Box 1628
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Chief Cordova:

I have made several appointments to meet with you, however I was unable to keep them due to my personal appearance, my apologies. Therefore, it is with deep regret that I approach you in this manner, as of today I have no alternative.

During the past year, I have tried ignoring Officer Rodella's unprofessional behavior, his drinking problem and the abuse of his position as a patrolman, however this has gone beyond my tolerance and hereby request that you give this matter your immediate attention.

First of all, my family is fearful of this man. They have seen how he reacts at times. My children feel that they lost their father to this department and they see their mother being abused by someone representing the same department. Since Officer Rodella represents your department and our state, the following are reasons why I feel you as chief need to be apprised of these facts. I am listing different occurrences to give you an idea of what I am referring to:

1. On December 17, 1984, Officer Rodella took me out of our residence in Abiquiu, and drove me on SR 84, pulled me out of the car by the hair and left my lying out on the roadway. He then threatened to shoot me with his service revolver if I didn't walk back home. I asked him not to shoot me because of my two (2) children. After this incident/beating I was unable to work for two (2) days.
2. On January 5, 1985, he was acting strangely and I left the house, upon my return he had changed the locks in the house. I couldn't get in and left again. When I returned the next day I found all the vehicles flat.

I reported this incident to Lieut. Filip just for the record. Upon my return from Espanola on 1/06/85, after talking to Lieut. Filip, I met him and his brother past Abiquiu, he forced me off the highway. He then jumped into the pickup I was driving and while it was still moving, started beating me up and again left me so bruised I couldn't go work for (3) days.

3. On February 9, 1985, he beat me up again and on
4. February 28, 1985, again, this time he had his service revolver pointed at my face bruising me badly.
5. On March 21, 1985, while attending the State Basketball Tournaments in Albuquerque, he took me out on the parking lot of the Civic and started beating me. He stopped when he realized that my father was watching. Officer Rodella then took me out on the interstate and just abused me. The next day while in Albuquerque we again argued and he started at me again, this time he hit me until I passed out. When I came back, I begged him to leave me alone or take me to the hospital as I couldn't even walk. Again after this incident I missed work because of my appearance.
6. On the evening of April 6, 1985, he was called by some of his friends to a party in Canones. Since he was on duty he asked me if I would go with him and foolishly, I agreed. On our way up, we involved ourselves in an argument. By the time we arrived at Canones, I told him I wouldn't get down and instead waited in the unit. I waited for awhile but figured from the music and the noise that he wouldn't be coming out soon. I then walked to a friend's house. Upon my return to Abiquiu that night, I found the vehicles flat; therefore, I knew he would beat me up upon his return. Needless to say, a repeat of his behavior.
7. On May 2, 1985, while we visited with my sister at her home in Gallina, he got pretty drunk and decided he was going to try out his truck. He invited my nephew and took me along. He drove like a manic and in the process of us trying to talk him into slowing down, he got in an argument with my nephew and started fighting, pulled out a gun and pointed it to his head. He warned my nephew to keep quiet because he and his father had full control of this county and nobody better mess with him.

8. On May 10, 1985, while vacationing in California, he had some kinky idea and because I didn't agree with him, he just got violent, grabbed a wire hanger and started hitting me, tore my clothes and kicked me around. There I couldn't get in touch with anyone.
9. On May 22, 1985,,, which was the eyeopener for me, he contacted me at work and advised me that I better beware when I got home that evening. I was terrified. I made an effort to contact Officer Chavez to see if he would be around the area so he could help me. I was unable to make contact with Officer Chavez on that day and proceeded to go home but decided to go to Espanola and upon my return to Abiquiu, I met him and he tried forcing me off the highway into an embankment. He was in his patrol car and followed me back into Espanola. I was frightened to stop. After getting back home that evening, he told me he didn't care who found out about what he was doing, he was going to use and abuse me again and again.
10. On May 30, 1985, I left Officer Rodella with the hope that he would realize what he was doing. He called me to go to Abiquiu and talk on June 4, 1985. I went over and he tried strangulating me with a belt. I had to go to the Cuba Health Center for treatment and reported to them exactly what had happened.

These are but a new of the instances in which he has been abusive. You might say I could have reported him. Chief, I know I couldn't he had intimidated me to the point that I was running scared. I couldn't call anyone. He threatened to kill me and my family if we got involved and he stated time and time again that no officer would believe me anyway, and in this county he could get away with murder.

Officer Rodella has a drinking problem and is compounded when he smokes marijuana (this happens quite often). I feel that you or his immediate supervisor need to give this some attention.

I have since June 5, 1985, been staying in Gallina, however I fear for my family. I realize "his family is the law" as he says, and he will do anything to get even with us.

I understand that he has been "promoted" as he says to work with the Governor. I will do what is in my power to see that this man is evaluated and kept from thinking that instead of being promoted, he be reprimanded.

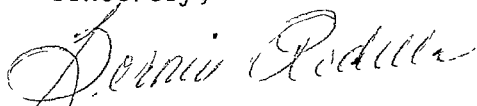
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Officer Rodella will repudiate everything that I have revealed as he has done it before, however, I will strongly stand on my word.

For your information I am sending a copy of the days I've had to be out of work for his erratic behavior.

Chief, please do something about this officer before he really hurts someone.

Sincerely,


Bernice Gomez Rodella